

**INVESTIGATIVE REPORT:**

This report pertains to an investigation of the identification of the burial location, or headstone markings, of a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during the Great War 1914-1921.

**SUBMITTED TO:**

[CWGC Canadian Agency](#)

66 Slater Street

Suite 1707

Ottawa Ontario Canada K1A 0P4

Att: [Dominique Boulais](#)

**Report Date:** 24 August 2015

**Reason for Submission:** ("X" means purpose of the report)

<b>Casualty Identification:</b>		<b>Burial Information:</b>	
Confirmed Identity	X	Burial Location Identified	X
Most Probable Identity		Grave Stone Correction	X
Questionable Identity		Grave Records Correction	X
Incorrect Identity		Request for CWGC Details	
Other		Other	

**Supporting Documents:** (# refers to attachment number; "I" information provided)

<b>Casualty Identification:</b>		<b>Burial Information:</b>	
Crawford, Lawrence Holtby	i	Harlebeke New British	<a href="#">link</a>
P.P.C.L.I.	i	West-Vlaanderen, Belgium	i
Private #475812	i	Plot 13 Row A Grave 18	i
Death: 4 (24) June 1916	<a href="#">link</a>	Burial 23 July 1924	i
Attestation Papers	<a href="#">link</a>	Cemetery Schematic	<a href="#">link</a>
Service Record	<a href="#">link</a>	Graves Registration Report	7
Circumstance of Death	1	Concentration of Grave	8
CEF Canada Register	2	Headstone Register	
War Diary Extract(s)	3	Casualty Spreadsheet	
Area Map(s)	4	Exhumation Locations	9
Trench Map(s)		Grave Stone Photograph	
Possible Candidates List	5	Grave Stone Inscription	
Excluded Candidates List		Memorial Inscription/Photo	
Other (I.R.C. Geneva)	6	Reporting and Review	10

**Summary of Findings:**

The Graves Registration Report form for Plot 13 Row A Grave 18 in the Harlebeke British Cemetery lists an UNKNOWN CANADIAN SOLDIER P.P.C.L.I June 4, 1916.

The evidence is clear that the remains in this location are those of Private Lawrence Crawford #475812 who died as a Prisoner of War near Bezirk Zillebeke 4 June 1916.

## Details of Findings:

The findings are conclusive that the remains in Plot 13 Row AS Grave 18 are those of Private Lawrence Crawford of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry who died as a Prisoner of War in on or shortly after June 4, 1916.

The findings are based on the following:

1. The Circumstance of Death file for Private Lawrence Holtby Crawford reports that he was "previously reported missing 24-6-16, now officially reported died while Prisoner of War in the neighbourhood of Zillebeke. It further states that he was buried at Bezirk (Attachment #1). The date of 24 June 1916 was carried forward to the CWGC records, which should be changed to 4 June 1916.
2. The Canadian Graves Register confirms the report and notes that no information on the burial was recorded as of April 30, 1921. As such, his name was recorded on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial as a Canadian soldier who had no known grave (Attachment #2).
3. The War Diary of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (P.P.C.L.I.) details the actions of the unit at the time of the death of Private Crawford (Attachment #3). It is clear from that report that the unit was under a relentless barrage of shell fire, in addition to rifle and machine gun fire (Attachment #3). It was during this period that Private Crawford was captured, or recovered wounded by the German forces after the battle.
4. At the time of the action on June 3, 1916 the P.P.C.L.I. was in the Ypres Salient on the west of Sanctuary Wood, as shown in Nicholson Map 4b (Attachment #4). The Battle of Mont Sorrel (2-13 June 1916) saw the PPCLI holding the Sanctuary Wood sector. During its stout defence against the German attack 2-4 June, the Regiment suffered grievously.
5. Among the confirmed casualties reported for the P.P. C.L.I. were 2 officers and 45 men taken prisoner. On the Menin Gate from this action are a 143 officers and men listed. Two of names are of soldiers taken prisoner and who died in German hands. The men were:
  - a. Private William SMEDLEY #21521
  - b. Private Lawrence Holtby CRAWFORD #475812

Private William SMEDLEY 21521 was reported missing in action 2-4 June 1916. A report dated 17 August 1916 was received saying he had died as a prisoner of war on 13 June 1916 at Ledgehem, Belgium. Private Lawrence Holtby CRAWFORD 475812 was reported as missing in action 3 June 1916. He was reported as having died as a prisoner of war Bezirk Zillebeke 4 June 1916.

We know from the Circumstance of Death file that only Private Crawford was exhumed from a site near Bezirk Zillebeke, thus excluding Private Smedley.

All of the other PPCLI prisoners of war (4 officers and 75 men) have been confirmed by known grave or having survived the war in previous research. (*Source: Chapter 8 Behind Enemy Lines 1915-1918, With the Patricia's in Flanders 1914-1918*).

6. The International Committee of the Red Cross (I.C.R.C.) in Geneva, Switzerland maintains historical archives of the "[Prisoners of the First World War](#)". Within those archives we found the record related to Private Crawford (Attachment #6). With translation, this confirms that Private Crawford died in captivity and was buried at Bezirk Zillebeke.
7. The Graves Registration Report Form lists an UNKNOWN CANADIAN SOLDIER P.P.C.L.I June 4, 1916 as being buried in Plot 13 Row A Grave 18 at the Harlebeke New British Cemetery (Attachment #7). The reported CWGC date is June 24, 1916.
8. The concentration report reveals the PPCLI body was brought from Gheluwe German Cemetery (approximately 9 kms SE of Ypres). The PPCLI soldier had died in German hands 4 June 1916 and was buried in German grave #276 (Attachment #8). Graves 12 through 17 are also the remains of Canadians who were buried in that location, all of whom were named. All were identified by a "G.B. List & Cross".
9. The area where Private Crawford was buried is some distance from the area where he was taken Prisoner of War, identified on the burial return at the Gheluwe German Military Cemetery as depicted on the 1916 trench map Sheet 28.q4.d.5.5. Private Smedley was buried at Ledeghem (*now Ledegem*) 6 km to the Northeast of Gheluwe, as illustrated by the 2015 Google Earth image. The Harlebeke New British Cemetery is just east of Ypres at Sheet 28 H12 d.9.9 (Attachment #9).

#### **Action Required:**

The "Investigative Report" has been prepared in accordance with the procedures and criteria set out by the CWGC, should they wish to make any changes to the commemoration details (Attachment #10).

The evidence is clear that the only candidate for the remains buried at the Harlebeke British Cemetery in Plot 13 Row A Grave 18 is Private Lawrence Crawford. The only other candidate was buried elsewhere and far from the remains of Crawford. All other P.P.C.L.I. POWs are accounted for at this time. Private Crawford died on or about 4 June 1915 while in German hands.

# ATTACHMENT #1

1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAME	4. CHRISTIAN NAMES
475812	Private	CRAWFORD	Lawrence Holtby
5. UNIT OR SHIP	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. H.Q. FILE NO.	8. REGIMENT
Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry	Not available.	649-C-3697	Not stated
9. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY		10. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN	
"Previously reported Missing 24-6-16, now officially reported Died Whilst Prisoner of War in the neighbourhood of Zillebeke."			
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY			
NOTE:—Boxes 11, 12 and 13 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	15. REGISTERED NO. OF GRAVE
		East West Row	
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	17. EXPOSURE NO.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLIED TO	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHIRT.			

19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SHIRT.

Buried at Bezirk, Zillebeke.

# ATTACHMENT #2

FORM E13  
1054-10M-16-11-16.

E-13.

10435

NUMBER 475812 RANK Pte. NAME CRAWFORD L.H.

UNIT P.R.C.I.I. NEXT-OF-KIN                     

FILE NO. R.L.                     

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	CAS. SHEET NO
Not stated.	Prev. unofficially repta. Died whilst Prisoner of War - Now officially repta. Died whilst Prisoner of War.	A.529.

DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE.
X	No information of Burial as at 30/4/21	Auth 649-6-3697.

**MENIN GATE  
MEMORIAL**



## ATTACHMENT #3

<http://data2.collectionscanada.ca/e/e043/e001072551.jpg>

June 2nd, 1916.

At 8.30 a.m. the enemy began shelling our front line and supports. This gradually increased to an intense bombardment from H.E. shells and trench mortars. The bombardment lasted for five hours when it was lifted and an infantry attack followed. The enemy succeeded in capturing the front line of our right company No. 1. The garrison having been almost annihilated. Our left company No. 2 succeeded in holding their trench and stopped an enemy bombing attack. Our supports held, on the right, ~~the~~ the greater part of Warrington Avenue and Lovers Lane to Border Lane, and on the left, the "R" series of trenches. Our casualties were heavy. In the evening the enemy evidently suspected a counter attack as they opened up rapid machine gun and rifle fire and an intense barrage in our rear. Water and food supply low.

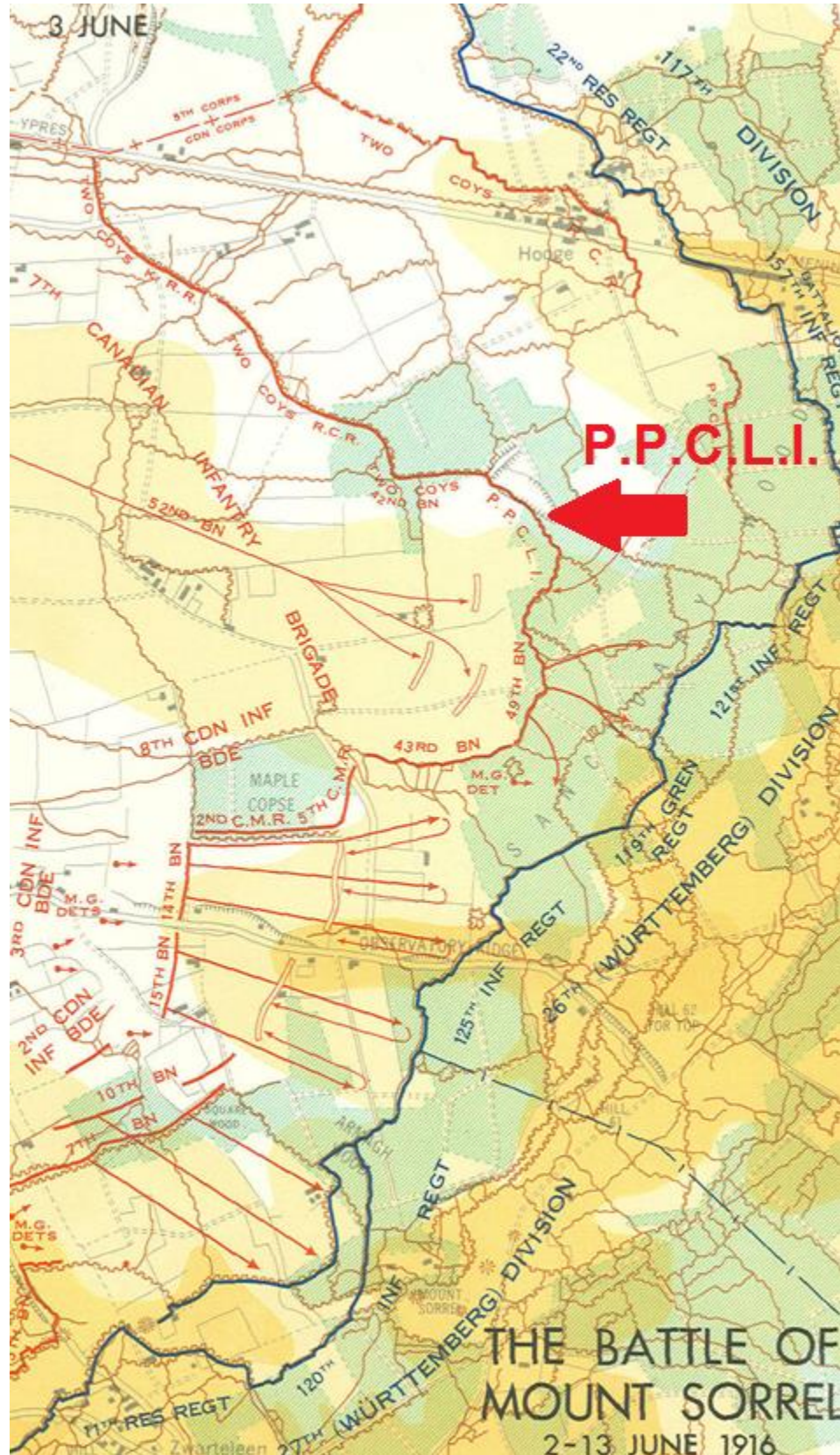
June 3rd. 1916.

About midnight 2/3 the enemy in the same manner showed nervousness and again at daybreak on the third when the barrage was kept up for about eighty-five minutes. The forty-ninth battalion made a counter attack from our trenches about nine a.m. which was not successful bring held up by machine gun and rifle fire. It resulted however, in our improving our positions. The enemy shelled our positions considerably during the day and in the evening, as usual, showed considerable nervousness and fear of counter attacks by opening up their barrage of rifle, machine gun and shell fire.

June 4th, 1916.

Shelling continued all day but our casualties were not severe. At daybreak the 43rd Bn. came up on our right and the 60th on our left to relieve us but as it was too light the relief was postponed until evening when the 49th Bn and ourselves were relieved by the 60th and 43rd Bns. The battalion as relieved marched to the Asylum via the Lille gate and were conveyed to "C" camp by Motor Lorry.

## **ATTACHMENT #4**





# ATTACHMENT #5

Name	Rank	Service Number	Date of Death	Age	Regiment / Service	Service Country	Grave / Memorial Reference	Cemetery / Memorial Name	Docs.
CRAWFORD, LAURENCE HOLTBY	Private	475812	24/06/1916	20	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (Eastern Ontario Regiment)	Canadian	Panel 10.	YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL	

Name	Rank	Service Number	Date of Death	Age	Regiment / Service	Service Country	Grave / Memorial Reference	Cemetery / Memorial Name	Docs.
SMEDLEY, W	Private	21521	13/06/1916	24	Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (Eastern Ontario Regiment)	Canadian	Panel 10.	YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL	

7265

475812

Regiment or Corps *P. A. C. L. I.*

Regimental No. *249-929* Rank *Corpl. H.* Name *Crawford*

Enlisted (a) *21/7/15* Terms of Service (a) *1 year or more* Service reckons from (a) *21/7/15*

Date of promotion to present rank } Date of appointment to lance rank } Numerical position on roll of N.C.O.s }

Extended } Re-engaged } Qualification (v) }

Report		Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, associations, etc., during active service as reported on Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 26, or in other official documents. The subject to be named in each case.	Place	Date	Remarks taken from Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 26, or other official documents.
Date	From whom received				
<i>30/4/15</i>	<i>Proceeded overseas</i>				<i>A. A. G. S. A. A. G.</i>
<i>1-12-15</i>	<i>Can. Base. Arrived in France and taken on strength.</i>	<i>Can. Base.</i>	<i>1-12-15</i>	<i>Hom. Roll.</i>	
<i>7-2-16</i>	<i>Can. Base. D. Left C.B.D. for Unit in the Field.</i>		<i>7-2-16</i>	<i>101/BQ/1914</i>	
<i>12-2-16</i>	<i>O.C. Battn. Joined Unit in the Field.</i>		<i>12-2-16</i>	<i>B. 213</i>	
<i>13-1-16</i>	<i>W.A. Letter. Reverts to Rank in the Field.</i>		<i>13-1-16</i>	<i>Auth. G.O. 121/General/1162 (a, g, h)</i>	
<i>10-6-16</i>	<i>J.M. Battn. Missing After Action</i>	<i>Field.</i>	<i>10-6-16</i>	<i>Part of Order No. 19. dt. 7-5-16</i>	
			<i>3-6-16</i>	<i>B. 213. Pl. H. O. 26. dt. 30-6-16</i>	
<i>16. 8. 16.</i>	<i>P.R.C. 2. Now unofficially reported dead as Major Gillebeke, gazetted. San. M. 201.</i>			<i>C.L.A. 425.</i>	
<i>31. 8. 16.</i>	<i>P.R.C. 2. Now officially reported dead as Major Gillebeke, gazetted. San. M. 201.</i>			<i>P.T.D. 34.</i>	

*101 In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or added into Section D, Army Reserve, particulars of such re-engagement or addition will be entered.*

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*11. 1. 17.* *P.R.C. 2. Now officially reported dead as Major Gillebeke, gazetted. San. M. 201.*

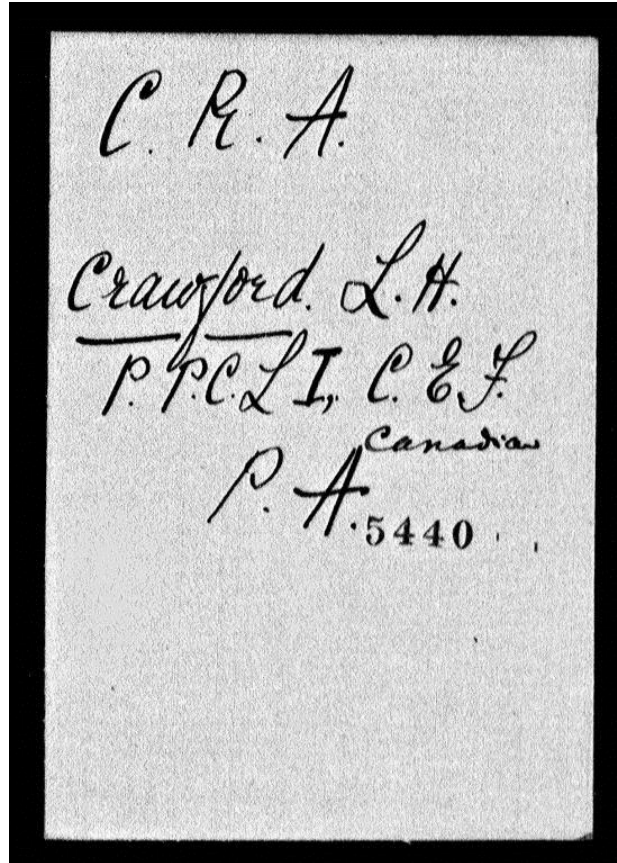
*11. 1. 17.* *P.R.C. 2. Now officially reported dead as Major Gillebeke, gazetted. San. M. 201.*

*C.L.A. 529.*

*101 In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or added into Section D, Army Reserve, particulars of such re-engagement or addition will be entered.*



## ATTACHMENT #6



*Fische.  
Ludlow.*


Engländer.  
17.7.16.

Central-Nachweise-Büro.

P.A. 5440

- 1 - 22 JUL 1916 H.

TOTENLISTE.  
\*\*\*\*\*

<u>Smith.</u>	J.I., XVI. R/Welsh.Fus. No.18240. / gefallen 31.5.16 nordöstl. <u>Neuve Chapelle.</u> gemeldet: H.O. A.O.K.G.
<u>Poley.</u>	Michael., Sold., II/R.Muns.Fus.No.6741 / gefallen 20.6.16 nordwestl. <u>Lidvén.</u> gemeldet: H.O. A.O.K.G.
 <u>Crawford.</u>	L.H., P.P.C.L.I. C.E.F. / verstorben, beerdigt Bezirk <u>Zillbeke.</u> ge- meldet San.Kp., No.1. <u>XIII.A.K.</u>

verstarben = died; beerdigt = buried; gemeldet = reported



# ATTACHMENT #7

**COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.**

Army Form W. 3372.

**GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.**

Commune: HARLEBEKE.

REPORT No. 14 SCHEDULE No. 656 64c

PLACE OF BURIAL HARLEBEKE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY

Map Reference SHEET 29. H12. b. 9. 9..

The following are buried here:—

Certified correct & complete:  
*J. M. S. G. G. G.*  
Registration officer.

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd.	Plot, Row and Grave
PLOT 13: ROW "A".						
1/Can. Mount. Rif.	108177	CROSS	Pte. W. N.	11.6.16	E	1✓
1/R. Welch Fus.	10746	LEE	Pte. L. P.	9.10.14	E	2✓
R. Warwicks	- 2	RATCLIFFE	2/Lt. J. E. about	22.10.14.	E	3✓
2/R. Warwicks	1106	U. B. SOLDIER SNOOKS	PRE. H. <i>Pro X Believed to be</i>	about 22.10.14	E	4✓
2/R. Warwicks	10440	VICKERS	Sgt. T.	19.10.14	E	5✓
R. Warwicks	U. B. S. 4160	U. B. SOLDIER	Sgt. T. about	22.10.14	E	6✓
-do-	1979	GOTT JEPHCOTE.	PRE. H.	19-10-14	E	7✓
Believed to be:-						
2/R. Warwicks	8604	ORGAN	Pte. T. C.	7.11.14	E	8✓
R. Warwicks	-	TAYLOUR	Capt. G. R.	19.10.14	E	9✓
1/Lincs.	9318	FEATHERSTONE	Pte. G.	16.6.15	E	10✓
4/Can. Moun. Rif.	109199	ARCHER	Pte. G. E.	7.6.16.	E	11✓
-do-	113495	POWER	PTE. W. J.	8.6.16.	E	12✓
28/CANAD.	73064	LEONARD	SGT. D. R.	8.6.16	E	13✓
1/Can. Eng. 2/Tun. Co.	50230	JAMES	SPR. R.	7.6.16	E	14✓
1/Can. Moun. Rif.	114588	HOWES	PTE. J. N.	1.10.16	E	15✓
-do-	117003	BURNETT	SGT. J.	5.6.16.	E	16✓
-do-	106589	THOMSON	C. L. M.	5.6.16	E	17✓
P. P. C. L. I..		U. CAN. SOLDIER		4.6.16	E	18✓

X. U. B. Soldier Ref 40590

1/10. 30.7.25  
H. J. 4/8/25

ENTERED  
CLIP CHECKED

(6 31 5) W3160-P2723 100,000 9/19 HWV(P1024) Forms/W3372/3



# ATTACHMENT #8

PRINTED IN FRANCE BY ARMY PRINTING AND PUBLICATION SERVICE. FORM A-719-2013-100,000.

*HARLEBEKE 14-761E*

1/43/77 E W.G.R.1 No.3/M23/33 R dated 24.4.24.

23.7.24. CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES (Exhumation and Reburials).

**BURIAL RETURN.**

ALL CROSSES ERECTED

Name of Cemetery of Reburial HARLEBEKE, NEW BRITISH CEMETERY 29.H.12.d.9.9.

Plot	Row	Grave	Map Reference where body found	Was cross on grave?	Regimental particulars	Means of Identification	Were any effects forwarded to Base?
13	A	12	GHELUWE GERMAN, CEM. 28.Q.4.d.5.5. German Grave No. 287	Yes	113495 Pte.W.J.POWER 4/Canadian M.Rif. 8.6.16.	G.B.List & Cross	No
13	A	13	-do-	Yes	73064 Sgt.D.P.LEONARD 28/Canadians. 8.6.16.	-do-	No
13	A	14	-do-	Yes	50230 Spr.F.JAMES 1/Canadian Engrs., 7.6.16.	-do-	No
13	A	15	-do-	Yes	2/Tunn.Coy.J.N.HOWES 114588 Pte.J.N.HOWES 1/Canadian M.Rif. 1.10.16.	-do-	No
13	A	16	-do-	Yes	117003 Sgt.J.BURNETT 1/Canadian M.Rif. 5.6.16.	-do-	No
13	A	17	-do-	Yes	106589 C.L.M.THOMSON 1/Canadian M.Rif. 5.6.16.	G.B.List, Cross & Disc.	Yes Disc.
13	A	18	-do-	Yes	UNKNOWN CANADIAN SOLDIER P.P.C.L.I. 4.6.16.	G.B.List & Cross	No

**RECEIVED**  
21.7.24  
M.D. 8.24  
23

**REGISTERED**  
21.7.24  
M.D. 8.24  
23

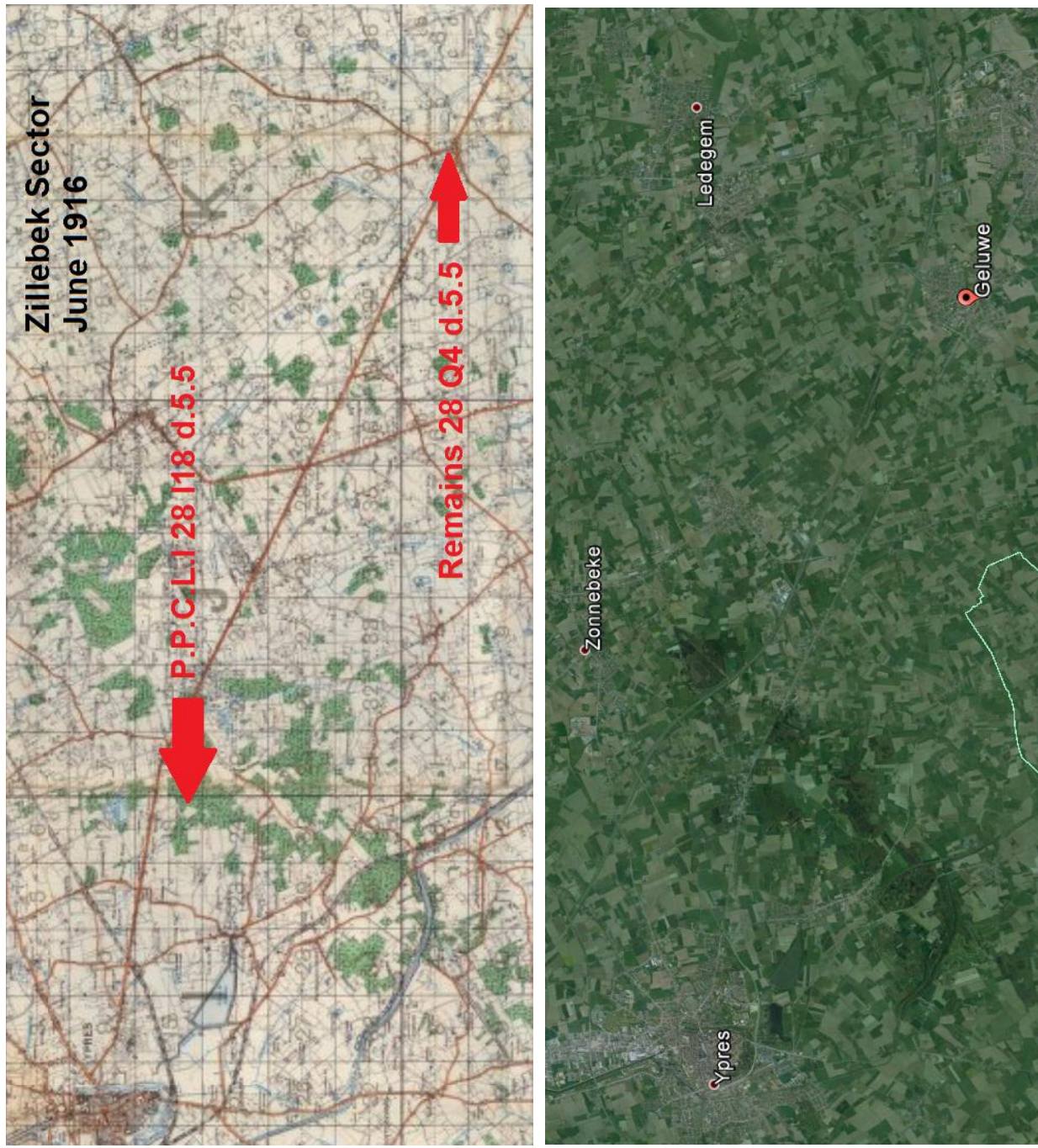
*W. G. R. 1*  
Registration Officer  
for Area Superintendent, No.1 Area I.W.G.C.

This form to be made out in triplicate, two copies being handed to the D.A.D. (C. of G.) and the other retained by the Burial Officer.



## ATTACHMENT #9

### 1915 Trench Map and 2015 Google Earth Satellite Image



## **ATTACHMENT #10**

This “*Reporting and Review*” attachment is provided to assist all parties in the submission of an investigative report related to the identification of the burial location, or headstone markings, of a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during the Great War 1914-1921. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) receives a copy of this report in the event they wish to make changes to the commemoration details. In order to alter the records, the CWGC has set out their criteria for the procedure and submission of cases for review, as detailed below. The CWGC is under no obligation to make changes based on a report.

<b>Procedure:</b>	<b>Guideline Criteria for Submission:</b>
All new identification cases need to be assessed in the first instance by the Canadian Agency (CA) and submissions should go to their office directly. After an initial assessment, if the Agency feels that the case is compelling, they will then pass all the documentation to the Commemorations Team at the Commission's Head Office. Head Office will then review the case and inform the CA of their findings. The Canadian authorities will then decide whether or not any changes to the arrangements for commemoration are required and inform the Commission accordingly.	Cases need to present clear and convincing evidence to prove the identity of a casualty and must not be based on assumption or speculation. The Commission's Commemoration Team will also consider whether the findings of a better informed contemporary investigation are being revisited and if there is any new evidence to consider. By way of example, it is unlikely that the Commission would support a revision of the arrangements for the commemoration where it is apparent that no new evidence is being presented and, a better informed previous decision is being revisited some 100 years later.

The following have participated in the preparation, review and submission of this report on a voluntary basis. Those noted below have read the investigative report and compared it to the criteria set out by the CWGC, as a guiding principle, and have agreed to have their name included as part of the review team. The CWGC may contact any of the reviewers at the e-mail address provided below.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
Stephen Newman	Private Researcher Bellewaerde House Publications	<a href="mailto:s-newman@shaw.ca">s-newman@shaw.ca</a>	Report Author
Richard Laughton	Private Researcher LMC Great War Research Company	<a href="mailto:rlaughton@laughton.ca">rlaughton@laughton.ca</a>	Reviewer